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Remarks prepared for delivery
by
Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland
at a dinner honoring an agricultural delegation from the
People's Republic of China,
at Detroit, Michigan, July 30, 1978.

It is a great honor to welcome the Chinese delegation to the United States and to the heartland of America which is my own home. This is not the only great agricultural area in our country, but it would be difficult to find a finer one in the entire world.

The 12 Midwestern states you will be visiting account for around 45 percent of the value of U.S. farm production. If you include California, the total is well over one-half of U.S. production value. I am pleased that you will be visiting each of these states. I am delighted with the growing friendship between our peoples. This is manifest in many ways:

There is increased understanding.

Both official and non-official contacts between our nations have been growing. This exchange of which you are a part is evidence of the broad base for friendship between our peoples. The state of Michigan is to be congratulated for initiating that exchange and for sharing the opportunity with its sister states here in the Midwest.

Dale Ball, the Director of Agriculture in Michigan, has been a leader in trade development for the Midwest group. It is appropriate that he is to visit the People's Republic of China in September--to lead the delegation which will reciprocate for the American side.

We were pleased when Ambassador Han visited the Midwest in May. According to press accounts, one of the members of his party remarked that in Illinois they had finally met "the real Americans." As Secretary of Agriculture for all the United States, I can't say that. But that statement does give me satisfaction, and we all would agree that America is much more than just official Washington. I am glad that Ambassador Han made that visit to mid-America and that your delegation is here to give more of our people a chance to meet with you and extend the hospitality for which rural Americans are renowned.

Scientific exchanges seem promising.

Our agriculture was well represented on the U.S. Science and Technology delegation that visited China earlier this month. Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Rupert Cutler was well pleased with the discussion of agricultural and other scientific questions in Peking--at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, at the National Agricultural Exhibition Center, and at Tsinghua University. Dr. Cutler met with Hao Chung-Shih, Vice Minister of Agriculture and Forestry.

He was especially interested in the discussion of possible educational and technical exchanges. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has a strong interest in a scientific and technological exchange program with the People's Republic of China. We have suggested that initial cooperation be in the area of agricultural research, and are confident that such exchanges would be mutually helpful.

Between 1972 and 1977, we have participated in four scientific exchanges arranged on the U.S. side by the National Academy of Sciences. These included exchanges in the fields of plant studies, insect control, wheat studies, and vegetable farming systems. We believe that further exchanges in agricultural science would contribute to the research programs of both countries.

We continue to trade.

This is one of the oldest and most effective means of communication since it affects living standards in both of our countries. In the current cotton marketing year, which ends a month from now, the People's Republic of China is taking over a half million bales of U.S. cotton. In addition, more than 80,000 bales have already been ordered for shipment in the next marketing year.

China's recent purchases from the United States also include about a million tons of wheat. Important quantities of U.S. soybean oil are also being exported to China.

Meanwhile, U.S. imports of China's farm products are small but growing. They amounted to \$67 million in calendar 1977 and will approximate \$85 million this year. U.S. imports of non-farm products from China are also increasing, with the result that U.S. imports of all products this year will be about \$250 million compared with \$200 million last year.

Two weeks ago, our press quoted Chairman Hua on China's economic progress the first half of this year. We congratulate you on that record, and commend the Chairman's remarks in support of expanding trade. Reports are that he also spoke quite favorably of future exchanges with other countries in science and technology and other branches of learning.

Trade is increasingly important to the United States. Throughout the world, in both bilateral and multilateral discussions, we are working toward lower trade barriers and expanding trade. We appreciate the trade we have with the People's Republic of China, and look forward to a strengthening of commercial relationships.

Agriculture Is Increasingly Global.

In both its domestic and foreign policies, the United States recognizes the interdependence of nations. American farmers depend on a world market. Our consumers depend on the products of other nations, both agricultural and non-agricultural.

Our domestic farm programs are oriented to world markets and needs. Our trade policies recognize that the world market returns about one-fifth of U.S. farm income--and that our export customers depend on access to our products.

Visiting the American Midwest in August, you will see some of the productivity on which these policies are based. Again, I welcome you to the United States for a visit which I believe to be historic and far-reaching in its importance.

May I say, as a postscript, that I am delighted with the invitation extended to me on Friday by members of this delegation that I visit the People's Republic of China. We do not have the details worked out at this time, but the timing is sometime in October. I thank you, and look forward to this singular opportunity to further our relationships in the field of agriculture.

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